

Message Text

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PAGE 01 TOKYO 14628 300831Z

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FM AMEMBASSY TOKYO

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 2594

INFO USDEL MTN GENEVA

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E.O. 11652: N/A

TAGS: EFIS, JA

SUBJECT: HERRING IMPORT QUOTA

REF: STATE 239327 (NOTAL)

1. VOLUME OF QUOTA:

WHILE JAPAN HAS LIBERALIZED IMPORTS OF HERRING ROE SINCE MAY 1 1972, HERRING IS STILL AN IMPORT QUOTA ITEM AND ITS ANNUAL QUOTA WAS 13,000 METRIC TONS (MT) FOR FY 74, FY 75 AND FY 76.

2. HOW QUOTA IS SET:

IN CONSULTATIONS WITH FISHERIES AGENCY, MITI SETS THE ANNUAL QUOTA. THE FEDERATION OF HOKKAIDO FISHERIES COOPERATIVES CONTROLS QUOTA ALLOCATIONS. BASED ON INFORMATION ON RELATIONS BETWEEN JAPANESE IMPORTERS VS. FOREIGN FISHERMEN/PACKERS AND A FORECAST FOR FOREIGN CATCHES, THE FEDERATION DISTRIBUTES THE QUOTA AMONG INTERESTED JAPANESE IMPORTERS. JAPANESE IMPORTERS VARY DEPENDING ON THE YEAR. THE FOLLOWING SIX FIRMS ARE THE JAPANESE IMPORTERS FOR FY 1976: KYOKUYO, MARUBENI, MITSUBISHI SHOJI, NAKAMURA SUISAN, NIHON KYODO BOEKI AND TOKYO MARUICHI SHOJI. SOURCES OF IMPORTS ARE THE UNITED STATES, CANADA AND MAINLAND CHINA.

3. IMPORT LIBERALIZATION:

ALTHOUGH THE PRESENT IMPORT QUOTA IS A GLOBAL ONE, NO PART OF THE QUOTA HAS BEEN ALLOCATED FOR USSR HERRING IN ACCORDANCE WITH ADMINISTRATIVE GUIDANCE OF THE FISHERIES AGENCY SINCE 1971 WHEN JAPANESE FISHING FOR MATURE HERRING IN THE OKHOTSK SEA WAS LIMITED OFFICIAL USE

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PAGE 02 TOKYO 14628 300831Z

BANNED BY THE ANNUAL JAPAN-USSR FISHERIES NEGOTIATIONS. BECAUSE

OF ANTI-USSR SENTIMENT AMONG JAPANESE HERRING FISHERMEN, IT WILL BE DIFFICULT FOR GOJ TO LIBERALIZE IMPORTS OF HERRING IN THE IMMEDIATE FUTURE SINCE THAT WOULD PERMIT IMPORTS FROM USSR.

4. INCREASING THE QUOTA:

FROM THE STANDPOINT OF GOJ PRICE STABILIZATION POLICY AND IN THE CONTEXT OF THE MTNS AT GENEVA, THE GOJ APPEARS TO BE WILLING TO INCREASE THE VOLUME OF THE QUOTA BUT WOULD HESITATE TO REMOVE IT ENTIRELY.

5. QUOTA UTILIZATION:

BECAUSE HERRING ROE HAS BEEN LIBERALIZED, FOREIGN COUNTRIES NOW EXPORT MORE HERRING ROE RATHER THAN HERRING TO JAPAN. ACCORDINGLY, THE JAPANESE IMPORT QUOTA FOR HERRING HAS NOT BEEN FULLY CONSUMED EVERY YEAR. ACTUAL IMPORT QUANTITY WAS 10,000 MT IN 1975 AND ONLY AN ESTIMATED 6,000 MT IS EXPECTED IN 1976. IT IS THEREFORE EXPECTED THAT THE QUOTA FOR 1977 WILL BE KEPT AT 13,000 MT.
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